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Schools and Their Builders

WPA of South Dakota

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SCHOOLS

AND THEIR BUILDERS



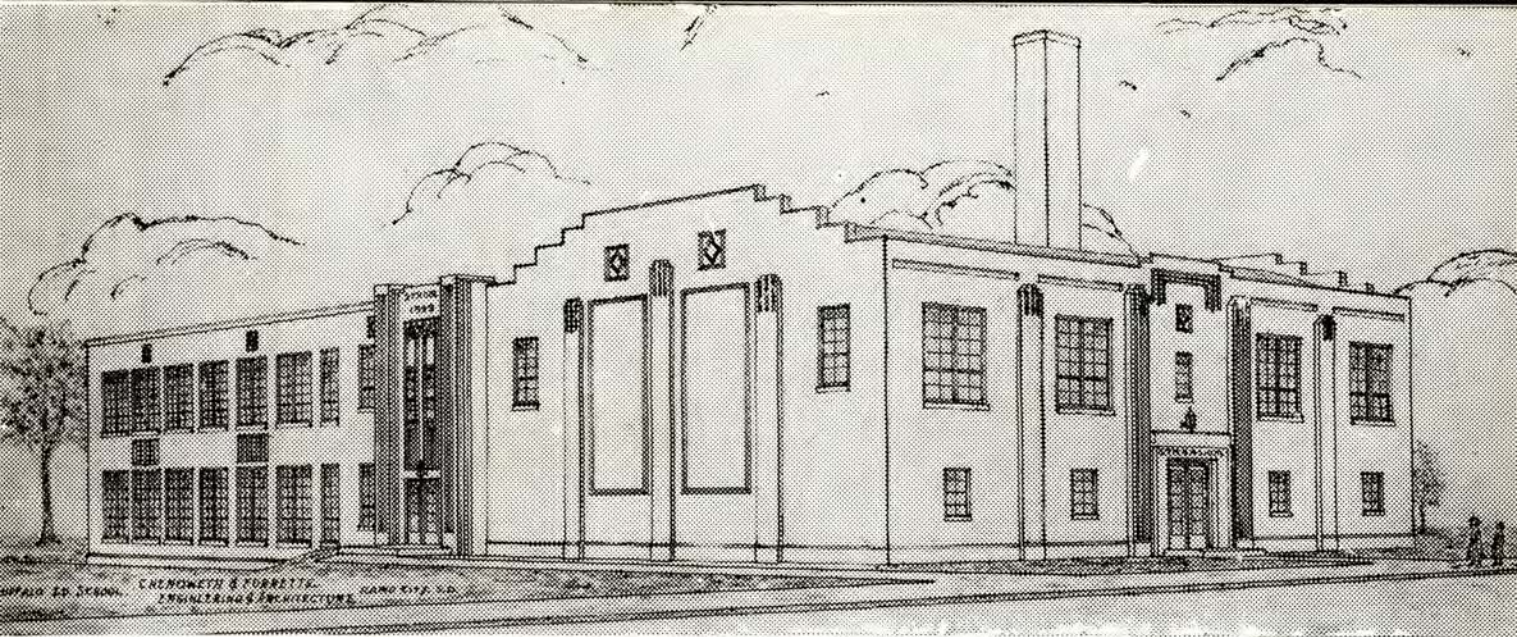
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
OF SOUTH DAKOTA

SCHOOLS

AND THEIR BUILDERS

*Prepared by the
Federal Writers' Project
Works Progress Administration
Mitchell, South Dakota*

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF SOUTH DAKOTA
M. A. KENNEDY STATE ADMINISTRATOR
1939



BUFFALO SCHOOL

Architects' Sketch of New School to be Built as WPA Project

SCHOOLS AND THEIR BUILDERS

Although South Dakotans are extremely conscious of the importance of education to good government, business and living conditions, it has been difficult for towns and rural communities to keep pace with the need for better school facilities. Economic conditions have forced many school boards to use unsafe, obsolete and inadequate buildings in recent years. The State fire marshal and school authorities have condemned school buildings in several towns because of fire hazards and other dangers; for instance, all the grade and high school classes of one town were held in an old frame building in which separate stoves heated each room and filled the lungs of the students with coal gas daily during the winter months. A number of towns were unable to handle increasing large numbers of students without running the risk of the building caving in, or necessitating the scattering of classes into various buildings of the town. While some schools have adequate class rooms, the students—and townspeople too—were handicapped for the lack of gymnasium and auditorium space.

With so many schools in run-down or dangerous condition, school officials began looking for a means to improve existing buildings, make necessary additions, or build entirely new structures. In spite of the characteristic desire of progressive communities to want better educational facilities for their youths, decreases in tax revenues made it impossible for school districts and school boards to raise the necessary funds. Here the Federal work program offered cooperation.

The Works Progress Administration has helped 183 South Dakota cities and communities to solve their school building problems.

In 32 cities and towns there are new, imposing, modern school buildings or additions as the result of the WPA program. The largest building in several towns is the fine new

school built by WPA workers; in one place the new school house has the only "indoor plumbing" in the town. Buildings of concrete, with white stucco finish, are very popular. Several structures are made of brick, and two are attractively and economically made of rammed earth.

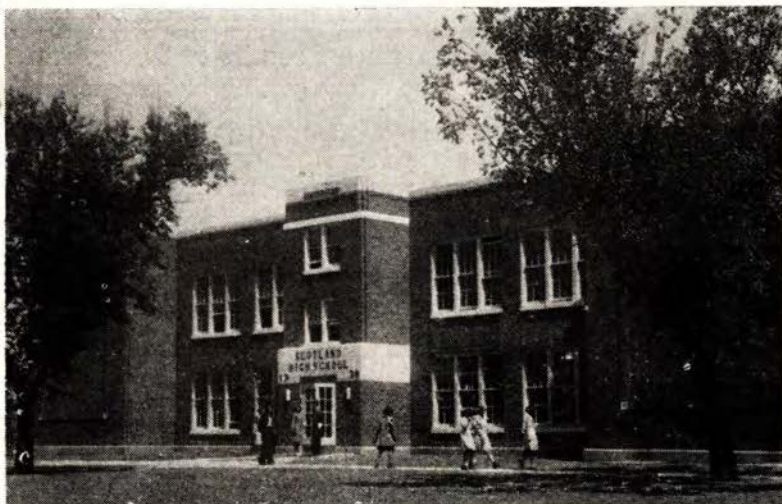
By sponsoring WPA projects, local groups—school boards, school districts, and city governments—have furnished an average of only 35 per cent of the total funds required to build the 32 new schools or additions. WPA carries the bulk of the labor costs, and employs local men to do the work. The total cost of the 32 structures is approximately \$1,163,736.

Cities and towns in which new schools, additions, auditoriums or gymnasiums have been built, or are under construction, at this time are: Scotland, Kadoka, Quinn, De Smet, Eureka, Timber Lake, Bison, Webster, Sorum, Waubay, Clark, Strandburg, Wallace, Corona, Arlington, Harrisburg, Parkston, Ethan, Kennebec, Delmont, Colome, Wood, Wasta, Wamblee, Interior, Central City, Forest City, Buffalo, White River, White-wood, State College at Brookings and the School for the Deaf at Sioux Falls.

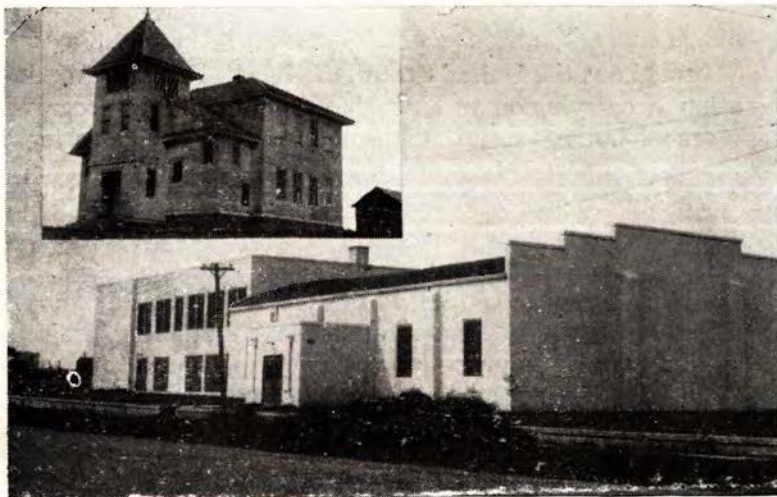
In addition to building town schools, the WPA has aided in the construction of 43 new rural schools in 19 counties in the state. WPA spent an average of 55 per cent of the total cost of rural schools. The average cost of an A-1 type standard school is \$4,620, of which the school districts contribute about 43 per cent. The 2A standard schools, which include a basement and toilet facilities, cost about a thousand dollars more, with sponsors contributing an average of 47 per cent. Three log schools were built by WPA in conjunction with the U. S. Indian Department in Washabaugh County.

There are new WPA-built rural schools in the following counties: Edmunds, McCook, Roberts, Spink, Hutchinson, Miner, Clay, Lyman, Charles Mix, Lawrence, Brown, Deuel, Day, Walworth, Lake, Turner, Washabaugh, Grant and Minnehaha.

One hundred and eleven WPA projects have been spon-



SCOTLAND HIGH SCHOOL



QUINN SCHOOLS—NEW AND OLD

sored for the improvement of existing buildings in 69 towns and a dozen counties. The improvements consist of laying floors, rebuilding sections of the school, excavating basements, putting in new heating plants, interior decoration and exterior painting and general repairs.

Schools in the following towns have been reconditioned with WPA aid: Andover, Veblen, Langford, Herreid, Mina, Mo-bridge, Wakpala, McLaughlin, Warner, Selby, McIntosh, Leola, Cheyenne Indian Agency, Pine Ridge, Flandreau Indian School, Ipswich, Watertown, Troy, Estelline, Big Stone, Albee, Bryant, Waverly, Oldham, Willow Lake, Clear Lake, Hayti, Lake Preston, Hetland, Conde, Frankfort, Northville, Sherman, Lennox, Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, Ramona, Montrose, Tripp, Bridgewater, Colton, Garretson, Letcher, Viborg, Alcester, Dallas, Colome, Corsica, Fairfax, Platte, Rockham, Dixon, Burke, St. Lawrence, Okaton, Lebanon, Tolstoy, Onida, Keystone, Custer, Buffalo Gap, Vale, New Underwood, Draper, Nisland, Spearfish, Witten and Newell.

Rural school improvement projects have been carried on in the following counties: Dewey, Brown, Perkins, McCook, Minnehaha, Turner, Yankton, Faulk, Gregory, Todd, Washington.

Throughout the United States, the Works Progress Administration is carrying on an extensive school building program. New school buildings and additions to existing educational facilities are of a sufficient number to place one in each of the Nation's 3,000 counties. The educational buildings repaired or improved would provide nearly all the country's 25,000 school districts with one improved with WPA aid.

WPA is especially proud of the fine workmanship developed and displayed by the workers on school building projects in South Dakota. Many relief workers who reported for work with no construction experience whatsoever learned to lay bricks, mix concrete, build floors, and do other technical jobs so well that they have since been able to secure private work.

The projects in each community do double duty: jobs are provided for the unemployed, and schools are provided for all children.

NEW SCHOOLS AND ADDITIONS

Scotland

Just as the first school in Dakota Territory was erected in Bon Homme County in 1860, so in 1938 one of the finest high schools in South Dakota was opened for use at Scotland in Bon Homme County. The old high school had been condemned and school classes were held in public buildings about town. This progressive community wanted a new building, but, unfortunately, there had been a drought. Architects estimated a suitable building would cost about \$90,000, if brick and other materials from the old school were salvaged. As such an amount would be practically impossible to raise, application was made for a WPA project and an election was held in which a \$28,000 bond issue was voted to make the sponsorship possible. The crew of WPA workers tore the old building down, salvaged the materials and erected a new building in place of the old one. It is 116 feet long and 84 feet wide, with all its walls, partitions, floors and corridors of reinforced concrete. The salvaged bricks form a facing on the building, and the interior is decorated attractively. The structure is two stories high and has a large basement, in which there is a lunchroom to accommodate the scores of tuition students from outside Scotland. Here also is a workshop, storeroom and boiler room. On the main floor is a domestic science room and kitchen with the latest of equipment. There is a manual training shop, science hall, band room, superintendent's office and a number of classrooms. On the second floor is an airy, light, ample study hall, a library, typewriting class room and several other classrooms. Instead of costing \$90,000 as expected, the building cost only \$62,760, of which 44 per cent was provided locally. Kings and Dixon of Mitchell were the architects.

Kadoka

At Kadoka a condemned frame building has been replaced by a large grade and high school of concrete, finished in white stucco. The building, 124 feet by 78, is two stories high and has a gynasium, assembly, five grade rooms, and five high school



WASTA SCHOOL UNDER CONSTRUCTION



KADOKA'S NEW CONCRETE SCHOOL.

class rooms. It cost \$61,997, of which the school district furnished 25 per cent. The architects were Hugill and Blatherwick, Sioux Falls.

Quinn

A completely modern school has been built with WPA aid at Quinn to replace one that was condemned as a fire trap. A large gymnasium-auditorium, three grade rooms, four high school class rooms and an assembly are housed in the structure. The local sponsors furnished materials which amounted to about 11 per cent of the building's total \$30,495 cost. The building is of monolithic concrete; Joseph J. Schwarz, supervising WPA architect, designed the building.

Wanblee

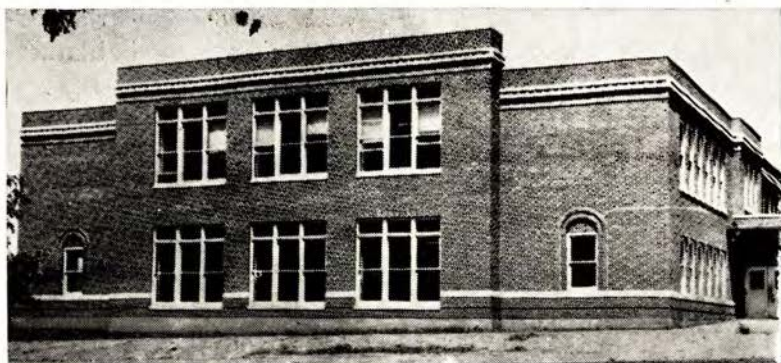
From a construction standpoint, one of the most interesting of the new schools is being built at Wanblee. Sponsored by the U. S. Indian Department, a handsome building is being constructed by WPA workers of rammed earth. Because of the distance from building materials, the large six-room grade school is being built from high grade clay found locally. Clay and sand are run through a concrete mixer and then sprinkled with water to obtain the right consistency. After being allowed to set 12 hours, the mixture is placed in forms three feet high and tamped firmly. The blocks of rammed earth form a wall 18 inches thick. The building has wood floors and plastered walls, and has modern plumbing and heating facilities. The cost was only \$16,800.

Bison

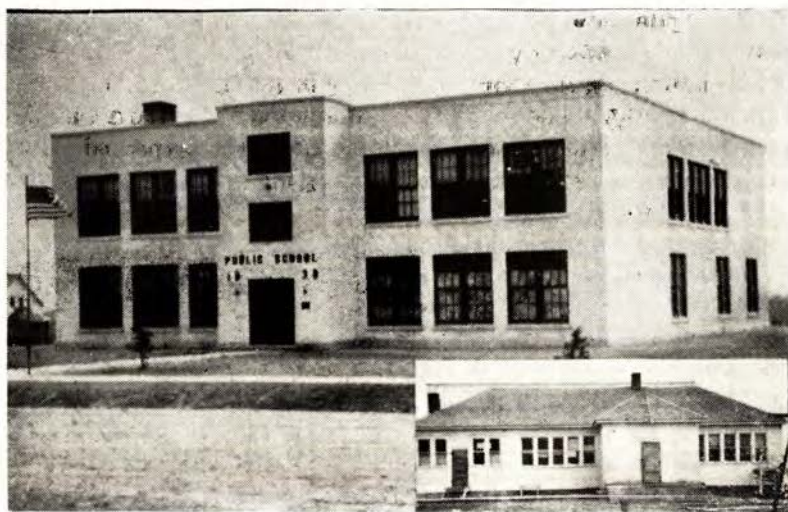
Under construction at Bison is a reinforced concrete school building 100 feet by 116 which will have an auditorium-gymnasium, four grade rooms, three high school class rooms and an assembly. The interior is to have insulated wall board and full heating and plumbing facilities. The cost is expected to be about \$50,000, of which about 31 per cent is furnished locally. Roland R. Wilkins, Aberdeen, is the architect.

De Smet

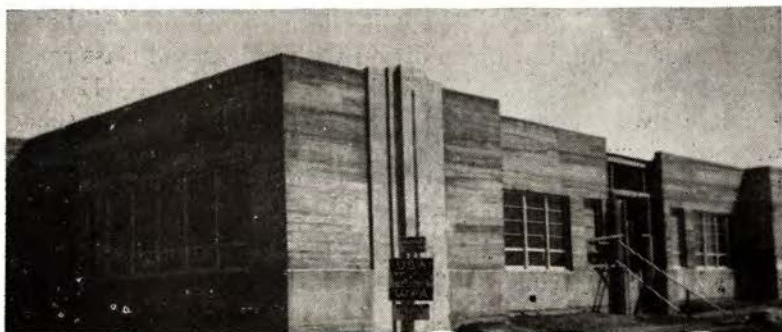
An example of cooperation between a school board and city government is at De Smet where the two boards combined



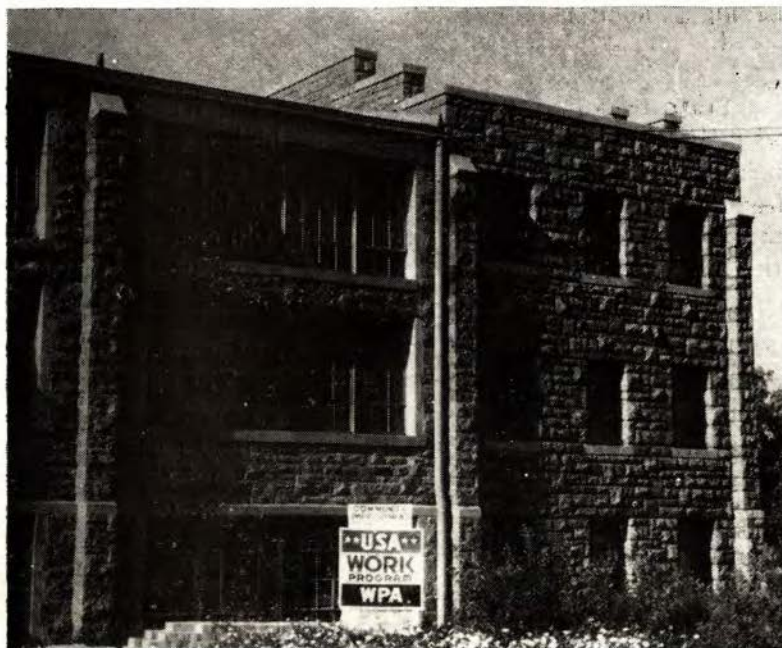
EUREKA SCHOOL ADDITION



NEW CONCRETE SCHOOL AT WOOD, AND OLD BUILDING



BISON SCHOOL UNDER CONSTRUCTION



ADDITION TO STATE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

funds to erect a building that will take care of both their needs. A gymnasium-auditorium addition with offices and class rooms is under construction. The building is 125 feet by 116; the architects were Hugill and Blatherwick. The existing school was not adequate for the school needs, but the board could not bond for sufficient money to erect a proper structure. The city was contemplating building a hall, so instead of making two small buildings they cooperated on this large one. The total cost will be approximately \$71,400.

Central City

At Central City a two-story, concrete grade school is being built at an approximate cost of \$39,000, with the local units contributing about \$11,380. The old school was not large enough to take care of the local youths, so this new structure having an auditorium-gymnasium and six class rooms was sponsored.

Wasta

State school authorities condemned the Wasta school so, with the aid of WPA, a new grade and high school building is being constructed. The building consists of a gymnasium 56 feet by 130, seven class rooms and an assembly. Designed by architect Joseph J. Schwarz, the building will cost \$37,256, with the WPA providing \$27,100.

Webster and Clark

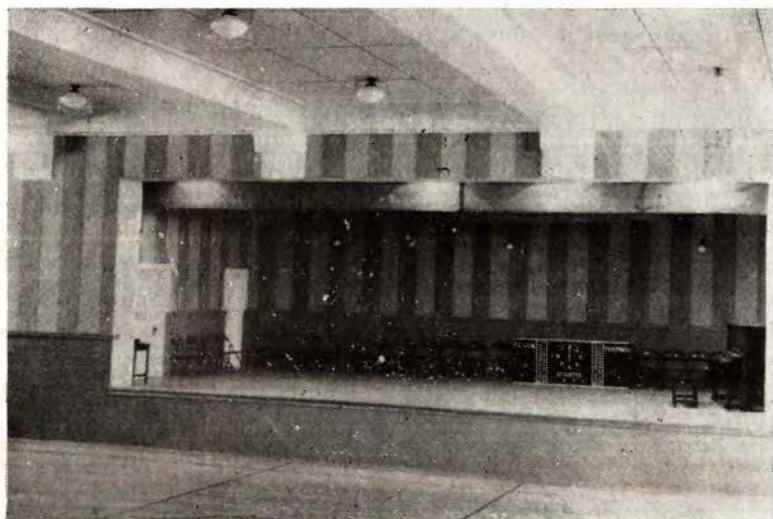
At both Webster and Clark new gymnasium additions were constructed to provide improved facilities. The outside wall of the old gymnasium of each school was removed and new concrete, brick and tile additions constructed. In each instance the old gym was converted into bleachers and shower rooms. The Webster addition is 70 feet by 80, and the Clark addition 60 feet by 85.

Strandburg

At Strandburg a gymnasium, with stage and ante rooms, will give the school improved facilities. The monolithic concrete addition is 70 feet by 50, and will cost \$18,960, nearly \$13,000 of which are Federal funds.



WANBLEE RAMMED EARTH SCHOOL. INSETS: DETAIL WORK



IN CLARK GYMNASIUM ADDITION

Wood

Wood has a new grade and high school building with an auditorium-gymnasium, seven class rooms and a study hall, which replaces a two-room school. Other classes had been held in several frame buildings that were not conducive to good health conditions. The new structure, 72 feet by 74, cost \$42,226, of which WPA furnished 67 per cent. Walter Dixon of Mitchell, was the architect.

Harrisburg

Harrisburg's school was overcrowded and without indoor athletic facilities, so a large addition has been made costing \$33,283. The new portion of the school has walls of concrete faced with brick to match the old building. WPA furnished 53 per cent of the cost of the large two-story structure.

Whitewood

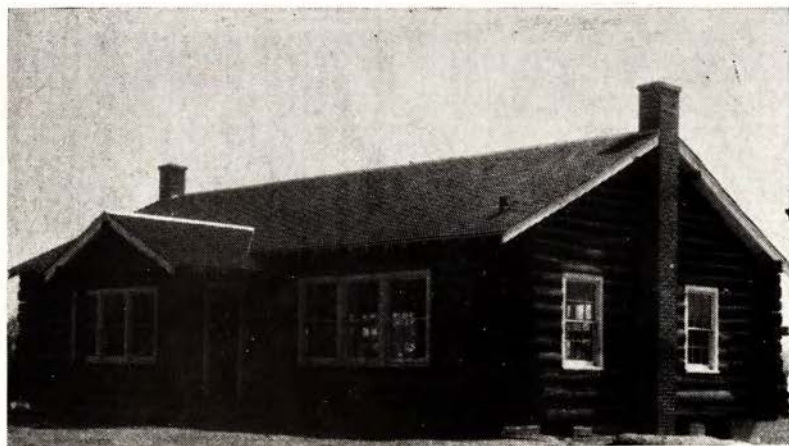
A large gymnasium-auditorium was built as an addition to the Whitewood school at a cost of \$20,566, three-fourths of which was paid by the WPA. The building was completed in 1937, before which time there was no place in Whitewood for school or public activities.

Buffalo

Buffalo, which has the only high school in Harding County, needed a new school to adequately take care of the increasingly large number of students that are enrolled there, and construction is now under way. The new \$73,569 building will be two stories high with walls of monolithic concrete. A WPA grant of \$53,000 has been authorized and \$20,000 will be supplied by the school district. The new building, 158 feet by 58, will be one of the finest in the state. A gymnasium-auditorium, eight class rooms, assembly and laboratory are provided for. The old heating plant is being torn down and a complete new system installed. Chenoweth and Forrette of Rapid City, architects.

Corona

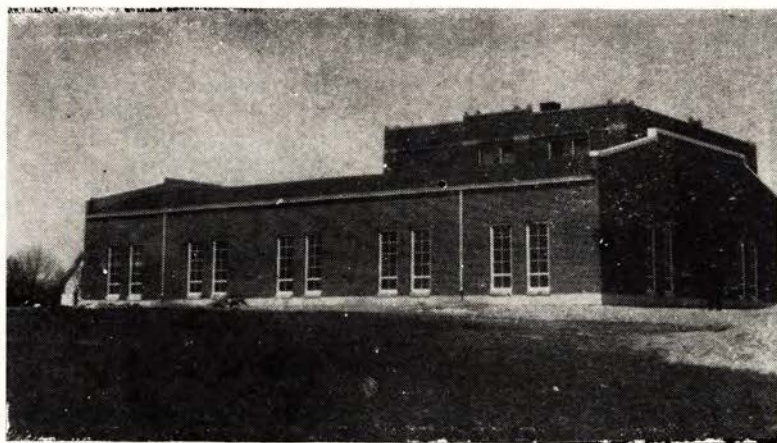
An addition to the Corona high school had been made to allow more room for study and class rooms.



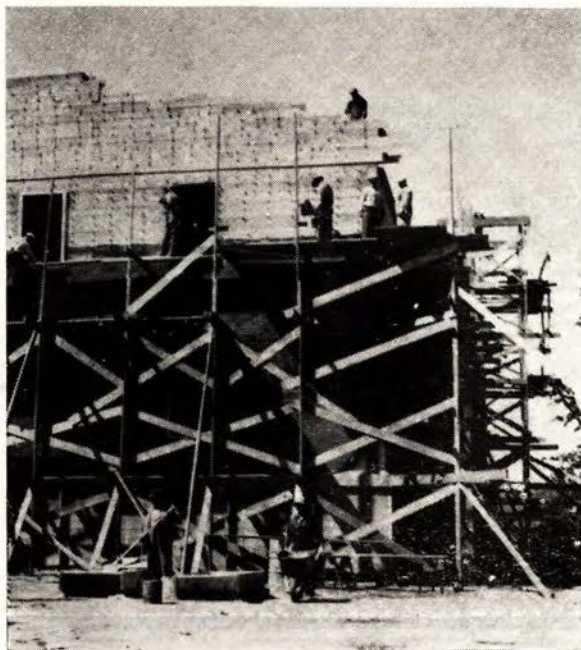
NEW LOG BUILDING IN SHANNON COUNTY



ADDITION TO HARRISBURG SCHOOL (REAR)



DELMONT GYMNASIUM-AUDITORIUM



PARKSTON GYM UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Delmont

At Delmont a new gymnasium-auditorium was constructed to match the main building, and the old gym was converted into class rooms in a \$34,986 project.

Interior

At Interior a concrete grade and high school building of about the same proportions and cost as the Wasta school is being constructed to replace a school that had been condemned by school authorities.

Waubay

A large addition is under construction at Waubay which will give the school a new gymnasium-auditorium and modern heating plant. The new concrete structure, 82 feet by 72, was designed by J. W. Henry, Aberdeen architect, and will cost about \$31,350 with WPA furnishing 69 per cent.

Eureka

A construction and renovating project has revamped the Eureka school building. An addition, larger than the original school, has been added to house the assembly, band room and six class rooms. The old building was remodeled throughout. J. W. Henry, Aberdeen architect, designed the improvement plans. The total project cost \$38,879.

Arlington

The Arlington grade and high school building is being enlarged with the addition of a two-story structure and basement. Six more class rooms will be provided in the \$19,727 brick and tile addition. C. W. F. Kuehn was the architect.

Forest City

The old school in Forest City burned and the amount recovered from the insurance company was used to sponsor a WPA project to replace the small school.

State College

An aviation building and a class building were constructed at South Dakota State College, Brookings, of cement blocks made at the site by relief labor.

